

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 799

By Watson

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the ministers and congregation of Samples Memorial Baptist Church in Cleveland.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this General Assembly should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people of Samples Memorial Baptist Church comprise one such noteworthy congregation; and

WHEREAS, the history of Samples Memorial Baptist Church dates back to the 1930s when several families in the community began attending prayer meetings in the home of Mrs. Dorcas Samples; and

WHEREAS, originally named Forrest Wood Baptist Mission, the congregation grew over the years and services were moved outside under the pine trees on the grounds of what is now Samples Memorial Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, in 1940, the congregation began clearing the meeting site under the pine trees, and Mr. Cleve Samples and Mr. Leonard Herron built the original square building that housed the first mission in the Samples community; the studs of the original building were hand peeled pine trees, and the timber was donated by Mrs. Mary Hampton; Mrs. Dorcas Samples collected donations for the tin roof and nails, and the original floor was made of sawdust; services were heated with wood donated by Mr. Cleve Samples, and the building was lighted with kerosene lamps; and

WHEREAS, from these humble beginnings, the Lord smiled on the good people of Forrest Wood Baptist Mission, and through the generous benevolence of Mrs. Dorcas Samples, who deeded one acre to the church in 1954, a new church building was built; and

WHEREAS, Leonard Higgins was called to become the first full-time pastor of the church on December 17, 1954, and he served the congregation with the greatest integrity, probity, and a deep sense of Christianity; and

WHEREAS, on August 13, 1955, the church was re-organized and officially named Samples Memorial Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, today, the over 200 congregational members of Samples Memorial Baptist Church continue to humbly serve the Lord by focusing on prayer, mission, and outreach; and

WHEREAS, blessed with steadfast and faithful leadership throughout the years, the congregation of Samples Memorial Baptist Church is currently led by Reverend Lee Ingram who demonstrates the utmost professionalism, ability, integrity, and Christian belief, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his congregation and colleagues alike; and

WHEREAS, since its modest beginnings, the church leaders and congregation at Samples Memorial Baptist Church, following the guidance of the Lord, have faithfully striven to carry out God's work in the world and continue in their mission and Christian endeavors; and

WHEREAS, as a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, Samples Memorial Baptist Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and Nation, and the members of this exceptional and historic congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of their community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and recognize the ministers and congregation of Samples Memorial Missionary Baptist Church, thank the good people of this community of faith for their notable service to the Lord and the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.